

Hello,

I would like to register my opposition to this change. Ending local control over broadcast outlets is not good for the consumer. It doesn't promote competition. The argument is that the networks aren't making a profit of broadcast and in trying to compete with cable television. The fact is that the networks are making profits and already own cable outlets. Examples: Fox owns FX and FoxNews, ABC owns ESPN, the Discovery Network and ABC Family, NBC owns CNBC and co-owns MSNBC. Time-Warner owns CNN, HBO/Cinemax and is the second largest cable outlet in the country. I'm not sure about CBS's cable ownership, but CBS reported profits last year. Unfortunately for the consumer current business practice states that if you can't compete with your competition, then buy them. Duopoly or Oligarchy, which is what's being espoused here, is not competition. These are the same arguments that are being used to undo the Communications deregulation act of 1996. Soon we will end up with two phone/cable companies. In my market, for instance, it would be Time-Warner (cable) and Verizon. The result is a duopoly. Duopolies don't work. Duopolies and Oligarchies collude. We know from history, because it's been tried. The result was the anti-trust legislation from the early 20th century and the Glass-Steagall (sp?) act that prohibited banks from selling securities (largely the reason the internet bubble was a bubble and not an enhancement of everyday life.) Has Microsoft's monopoly on software helped the consumer? Did Microsoft's deal with IBM to get IBM to not support OS/2 in order for IBM to sell Windows 95 help the consumer? I don't think so. Windows XP is only now getting to where OS/2 was in terms of stability and functionality 7 years ago. Competition from Apple (OSX) and now from Linux as the security, stability and functionality sent Microsoft back to the drawing board to examine the quality of their software.

Competition works better than any else to ensure diversity. Limiting Diversity is not in the interest of the republic. Remember, please that the USA is not a democracy, it's a republic and there is a difference. Larger media companies are not the answer, just as larger phone companies are not the answer. There will be less customer service and poorer programming quality. Programming quality is bad enough as it is. Poor programming quality is why the networks aren't competing.

I am vehemently opposed to the content providers owning the delivery system. It makes it too easy to control (and limit) the flow of information to the general public by both the government, in the name of homeland security, and the media companies which seek to limit choice.

This is a bad rule all the way around. Please leave the ownership rules alone.

Sincerely Yours,

Curtis J. Maurand
399 Alfred Rd., Unit 202
Biddeford, ME 04005